

National Agenda for the Environment and Aging

3 minute Testimony

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Responses to Questions 2 and 3 mostly--#2

- 1. Walkable Age-restricted Communities—Emphasis should be placed on the development of large-scale community plans that encourage residents to walk and allow small-scale para-transit alternatives to flourish.**
 - a. Many retirement community plans are oriented toward the automobile and are less sensitive to issues of aging-in-place.**
 - b. New Urbanism ideas about housing density and connections between retail and housing should be reflected in community plans because these plans emphasize walkable communities.**
 - c. It should be easy to add public transportation alternatives as residents age and can no longer rely on private transportation.**
- 2. Retirement Facilities Designed to Emphasize Walking—Housing with services should also be designed internally to encourage walking as a means of personal transportation and exercise**
 - a. Interior corridors and exterior walking pathways should link destinations in the building to encourage residents to use them for recreation.**
 - b. Places to sit, rest and recharge along pathways will encourage those who need to rest periodically.**
 - c. A range of exercise opportunities including par courses on the outside can encourage stretching, as well as walking for exercise.**
 - d. Emphasis on exercise will keep residents more physically competent and more independent for a longer period of time.**
- 3. Make Existing Communities More Supportive—Most older people would prefer to age in place—we should make selective improvements to neighborhoods with high concentrations of older people.**
 - a. 75% of elderly are home owners—about half of these have lived in their house and neighborhood for more than 40 years**
 - b. Priority should be given to the development of assisted living and other housing/service arrangements in more developed urban neighborhoods with high concentrations of older residents.**
 - c. Emphasis should be placed on mixed-use development. These are buildings along heavily trafficked corridors that use air rights over single story retail for housing. They generally have better access to retail goods and services as well as public transportation.**
 - d. Often existing land use and zoning requirements preclude these ideas.**
 - e. Systems of home delivered goods and services need to be strengthened.**

